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which the distribution of light before described is obtained. The PRESIDENT, in remarking upon Professor MICHELSON'S apparatus afterwards, said it seemed to increase the use of spectroscopic powers without the use of enormous prisms. The lines on ROWLAND'S instrument would require to be ruled across two feet in order to give the results which Professor MICHELSON obtained on a small surface."

NOVA AURIGÆ.

The new star which appeared in the constellation *Auriga* last winter gradually faded away until when last observed in April it was about the sixteenth magnitude. It was re-observed the morning of August 18 by Professors HOLDEN, SCHAEBERLE and myself, and found to have increased in brightness to about the 10.5 magnitude. All the observers agreed that its appearance differed from that of other stars of the same brightness in that its disk was larger and its light duller, but the moonlight interfered with further study of its character, and a small spectroscope was at once put on the telescope. The spectrum with weak dispersion consisted of three bright lines and a very faint continuous spectrum. The morning of August 20 I further examined its spectrum with a more powerful spectroscope attached to the 12-inch equatorial. One of the bright lines previously seen was resolved into three bright lines, which were at once recognized as the three characteristic nebular lines. The continuous spectrum was scarcely brighter than that of a twelfth magnitude star. Visual observations by Professor BARNARD with the 36-inch equatorial on the same morning also showed that the star is a nebula about three seconds of arc in diameter, with a stellar nucleus of the tenth magnitude, and that it has not moved appreciably since last March.

Further observations of the spectrum are in progress. The positions of the three nebular lines and seven other bright lines have been quite accurately determined. The positions of the three nebular lines would indicate that the nebula is moving towards us with a great velocity—about 175 miles per second.

The general character of the spectrum justifies us in calling this interesting object a planetary nebula. Whether we are to witness any further evolution remains to be seen. The broad and hazy character of the bright lines, and a number of peculiarities in their positions, give some promise of further changes. W. W. C.